

8 April 1984

BRINKLEY: Mr. Secretary, I want to change the subject. Is the Pentagon drawing up contingency plans to put U.S. combat troops in Central America? WEINBERGER: No, they are not, and I'm glad you asked me because that's another of those stories that appears and is attributed to an administration source who's usually some man you catch in the hall who gives you the answer that you want. There is no plan of that kind nor is there any necessity for it.

DONALDSON: Well, there's no necessity for it.

WEINBERGER: Nor is there any plan of that kind.

DONALDSON: All right. Don't you have contingency plans for almost everything? WEINBERGER: No, you don't have contingency plans for almost everything. You plan for the kinds of things that you may have to do and for the things that are part of the strategy of the United States and our strategic priorities and objectives, and this is not one of them.

DONALDSON: There is no plan, no strategy, no thought of putting U.S. combat troops in Central America?

WEINBERGER: That is correct. There is not.

DONALDSON: All right. Next question: Is the United States mining the harbors of Nicaragua? WEINBERGER: The United States is not mining the harbors of Nicaragua.

DONALDSON: Well, the CIA is part of the United States.

WEINBERGER: Well, I'm not talking about anything that the CIA is doing or not doing. I'm following the basic policy that is adopted by the government, by the State Department, by the CIA, by the Defense Department and not making any kinds of comments about anything of that sort. But from the declining to make any comment, you shouldn't draw any conclusions whatever.

DONALDSON: But you have us then, don't you? You won't comment on it, you won't deny it, but then you admonish us that by not denying we should draw no conclusions.

WEINBERGER: That's correct. That's exactly correct.